

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 IGA-02
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R 190635Z JUL 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4609

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3444

DEPT ALSO PASS AID

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ECON, SOCI, SWEL, MMOL
SUBJECT: OBSERVATIONS IN TRIPOLI AND BAABDA

1. VISITING AID OFFICER AND EMBOFF, ACCOMPANIED BY ABDULLAH BALTAJI OF MINISTRY OF HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT, WENT TO TRIPOLI AND BAABDA JULY 16. BASED ON EMBOFF'S PREVIOUS OBSERVATIONS AND LATEST VISIT, FOLLOWING WAS LEARNED.

2. CEMENT, ASBESTOS AND CHALK PLANTS AT CHEKKA AS WELL AS FERTILIZER PLANT AT SIL'ATA WERE OPERATING.

3. INDUSTRIAL AREA IMMEDIATELY SOUTH OF TRIPOLI SUFFERED ONLY LIGHT DAMAGE AND FACTORIES WERE FUNCTIONING. TRIPOLI-BEIRUT RAILROAD IS RUNNING AT LEAST AS FAR SOUTH AS BATROUN.

4. AL MINA WAS VIRTUALLY UNSCATHED. QOBBEH IS ONLY SECTION OF TRIPOLI WHICH SUFFERED MAJOR DAMAGE DURING FIGHTING. APARTMENT HOUSES HAVE BEEN ABANDONED BY RESIDENTS AND GUTTED OF ALL APPLIANCES AND FIXTURES. BALTAJI SAID ABOUT 10-15,000 PEOPLE, ABOUT HALF OF WHOM WERE MUSLIMS AND HALF CHRISTIANS, USED TO LIVE IN AREA, AND VIRTUALLY NONE HAVE RETURNED.
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(BALTAJI, WHO COMES FROM ONE OF OLDEST AND MOST PROMINENT SUNNI FAMILIES IN TRIPOLI, EXPRESSED DISMAY THAT MUCH ATTENTION HAD BEEN GIVEN TO DAMOUR BUT LITTLE TO QOBBEH.)

5. GOVERNMENT HOSPITAL, WHICH IS IN QOBBEH, FORMERLY HAD 150 BEDS. DURING FIGHTING, HOWEVER, IT WAS STRIPPED OF ALL EQUIPMENT, APPLIANCES AND FIXTURES DOWN TO MARBLE FROM FLOORS AND

FALSE CEILING IN OPERATING ROOM. REPLACEMENT OF DAMAGE EQUIPMENT WOULD COST ABOUT LL 5 MILLION, ACCORDING TO GOL. APPROXIMATELY ONE COMPANY OF SYRIAN AIRBORNE SOLDIERS NOW OCCUPY HOSPITAL, WHICH IS BEING USED TO STORE AMMUNITION, AT LEAST TWO WHEELED 120 MM MORTARS AND ONE SOVIET BM-14 ROCKET LAUNCHER.

6. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS AUTHORIZED LL ONE MILLION TO REPAIR HOSPITAL, BUT NOT MADE MONEY AVAILABLE FOR REPLACING EQUIPMENT. LOCATION OF HOSPITAL IN HEAVILY DAMAGED AREA, HOWEVER, MIGHT DISCOURAGE PATIENTS FROM COMING FOR TREATMENT. GOVERNMENT IS, THEREFORE, CONSIDERING RENTING AND CONVERTING SCHOOL IN EITHER TRIPOLI OR AL MINA FOR USE AS HOSPITAL INSTEAD. SCHOOL IN AL MINA APPEARS ARCHITECTURALLY MORE SUITABLE.

7. BAABDA HOSPITAL, WHICH HAD 200 BED CAPACITY BEFORE THE WAR, NOW HAS ONLY TEN BEDS FUNCTIONING BECAUSE OF LACK OF EQUIPMENT AND NURSING STAFF. HOSPITAL WAS ONLY LIGHTLY DAMAGED BY FIGHTING, AND MOST EQUIPMENT LOSSES WERE DUE TO LOOTING. REMAINING EQUIPMENT IS OUTDATED. COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAS AUTHORIZED AND BEGUN TO SPEND LL 300,000 FOR REPAIRS.

8. BEFORE THE WAR, GOVERNMENT BEGAN CONSTRUCTION OF NEW 500 BED HOSPITAL IN BAABDA ADJOINING OLD ONE. CONSTRUCTION WAS STOPPED BY WAR, BUT TEN STORY STRUCTURAL SHELL WAS CONSTRUCTED AND REMAINS INTACT.
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PARKER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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